

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4962
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 06796

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDIP, IS, SP
SUBJECT: ISRAEL'S RELATIONS WITH SPAIN

REF: TEL AVIV 7499

1. THE GOI VIEW OF FACTORS BEARING ON RELATIONS WITH
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SPAIN IS PARTLY RIGHT AND PARTLY WRONG, WE BELIEVE.
IT IS CORRECT THAT THE PROBLEM INVOLVES TIMING RATHER
THAN PRINCIPLE, IN THAT THE GOS IS COMMITTED TO A POLICY
OF HAVING RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, AND SPECIFICALLY
INCLUDES ISRAEL AS ONE WITH WHICH RELATIONS WILL BE
ESTABLISHED.
2. OFFICIAL GOS STATEMENTS (BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE)

ON THE SUBJECT CENTER ON THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND THE NEED FOR PROGRESS, WHAT FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA CALLED RECENTLY "THE BEGINNING OF A SOLUTION" ON THAT FRONT. A PRO-ISRAELI GESTURE IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH PROGRESS, SPANISH OFFICIALS CONTEND, WOULD BE TAKEN VERY BADLY BY THE ARABS, AND (ANOTHER ARGUMENT HAS IT) COULD APPEAR TO LEGITIMIZE THE OCCUPATION OF TERRITORY BY FORCE. (THE STANDARD GOS ME POSITION CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.)

3. SPAIN IS INDEED HIGHLY CONCERNED WITH ARAB SENSIBILITIES WITH OFFICIALS CITING NOT ONLY THE HISTORICAL TIES BUT POINTING TO THE PETROLEUM PROBLEM AS WELL AS HOPES FOR ARAB INVESTMENT HERE AND FOR THE EXPORT OF TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS GOODS TO ARAB COUNTRIES. THE RECENTLY SHARPENED CANARIES ISSUE (AND THE CONTINUING SAHARA ONE) DO NOT IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF EARLY SPANISH-ISRAELI RELATIONS, HOWEVER, FOR THE GOS IS WELL AWARE OF, AND TAKES CONSIDERABLE COMFORT FROM, THE FACT THAT THE ARAB COUNTRIES ARE FAR FROM UNITED IN SUPPORT OF ALGERIA ON EITHER OF THESE ISSUES. SPANISH OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT THE RESURGENCE OF THE CANARIES ISSUE HAS MADE SPAIN EVEN MORE DEPENDENT THAN EVER ON ARAB DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT.

4. NEITHER DO WE BELIEVE THAT SPANISH ENTRY INTO THE EC WOULD PROVIDE, IN SPANISH EYES, A SHIELD BEHIND WHICH TO
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HIDE FROM THE ARABS. SPANISH OFFICIALS HAVE REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT THE DIFFERENCE THAT THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE HAD RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL FROM THE BEGINNING, WHILE SPAIN HAS NEVER HAD THEM: THE GOS WOULD HAVE NO LUCK IN TRYING TO HIDE THIS DIFFERENCE FROM THE ARABS, OFFICIALS CONTEND. THEY ALSO POINT OUT THAT IT WAS ISRAEL THAT REFUSED TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH SPAIN IN THE EARLY DAYS, AND IN FACT CALLED FOR SPAIN TO BE EXPELLED FROM THE UN. 5. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOI RACK-UP OF POSITIVE FACTORS FAILED TO MENTION THE SPANISH SOCIALIST PARTY (PSOE), THE MAJOR OPPOSITION GROUP AND THE ONLY NATIONAL POLITICAL FORCE TO ISSUE A SPECIFIC CALL FOR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THIS IS SOMETHING OF AN ANOMALY FOR THE PSOE, WHICH GENERALLY TAKES A THIRD-WORLD LINE ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS.

6. OVERALL, HOWEVER, PROSPECTS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE ARE THAT THE GOS WILL STICK TO ITS INSISTENCE ON TANGIBLE PROGRESS ON THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AS THE SINE QUA NON FOR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. BREMENT

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